

CONSULTING THE RIVAL FOR INNOVATION:
The Educational and Aesthetical Values of Henri Matisse's
Islamic Experience

By

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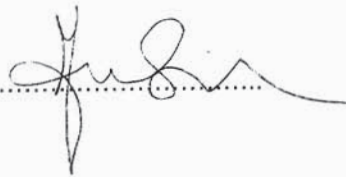
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The East saved us (Henry Matisse)

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Abstract

This thesis argues the influences of Islamic art on the works of Henri Matisse. The study investigates the educational and aesthetic values of these influences. It is informed by the argument that Matisse has succeeded in mixing his European artistic traditions with Islamic art traditions, and that such a mixture has the potential to change not only the way we do and appreciate art, but also the philosophy that underpins art making and understanding. Based on Matisse's Islamic experience, this research explores the significance of exposing the artistic self to the artistic other. It argues that hybridity in art, culture and education has the potential to generate new meanings, based on difference rather than conformity, and that such differences are energizing. Recognition of the other in artistic experience may influence both artistic and educational discourse. Studying Matisse from Islamic perspectives is unique, and represents readings from a non-Western point of view as well as the opportunity to explore links with contemporary educational, social, cultural and political issues. Within its educational perspectives, this study explores Matisse's Islamic experience in relation to a contemporary school context in which the positive impact of such an experience on teaching and learning art is investigated.